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BURMESE PRESS EYES JAPAN WITH MINGLED HOPE AND SUSPICION

Suspicion and amity in the Burmese attitude toward Japan are revealed in two articles from the Burmese press. Columnist Hnittpatchun of the independent Hanthawaddy, in its issue of 3 January 1953, saw promise in the proposals and conciliatory spirit of Eiji Wajima, director of the Asia Division of the Japanese Foreign Ministry. Wajima recently conferred in Rangoon with the Burmese Foreign Minister Sao Hkun Hkio. Wajima spoke freely to the press.

Hnittpatchun was interested especially in Wajima's statement that Japan will give special consideration to a request from Burma for aid of a type which would not fall under a reparations formula. The columnist felt that, on this basis, a peace treaty between the two nations could soon be completed, with Japan supplying certain agricultural and mining equipment and experts needed in Burma. He felt that "Japan can regain the good will of Southeast Asian nations by giving such aid."

On the other hand, in its News and Notes section, the progovernment Myanma Alin, 4 January 1953, took Japanese Prime Minister Yoshida to task for being "too busy" to see three Burmese newsmen who were in Tokyo on the invitation of the Japanese government. According to the comment in Myanma Alin, arrangements had been made by the Japanese Foreign Ministry for the three Burmese journalists to see the Prime Minister, but on the appointed day the Burmese were told that Yoshida was too busy to see them. The paper viewed this as an affront to the entire Burmese journalistic profession and wondered whether the Japanese government still harbors unfriendly feelings toward the Burmese. The Japanese Consul-General in Rangoon was urged by Myanma Alin to explain the incident.

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